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tory workers, incited by the more enlightened among them. Similarly, an effective regulation of sweat-shops will most probably follow a vigorous movement on the part of the victims themselves, doubtless through unions. The theory that men should be left to sell their labor without interference by the state may be a bad theory; and it is certainly often rejected in legislative practice; but if rejected as to individuals, it still commonly prevails as to classes of work-people.

A. P. WINSTON.

Les grèves. By LEON DE SEILHAC. Paris: Victor Le Coffre, 1903. 8vo, pp. vii + 257.

M. DE SEILHAC'S work is not devoid of interest; it presents in fragmentary fashion a considerable array of facts and somewhat intelligent comment, which doubtless justify its publication as a contribution to the popular literature of the subject. An American reader will probably be interested most in the pages which present excellently (in strong contrast with what we know here) the French law of strikes and of workmen's combinations, as the law has been judicially interpreted and enforced. The method of the work as a whole is, however, purely narrative, and not at all analytic, and it can scarcely be said to offer anything substantially new or peculiarly valuable.

A. P. W.

Le paysan et la crise rurale: Notice sur la dépopulation des campagnes, ses causes, ses effets, et ses remèdes. By ACHILLE MAGNIER. Paris: Librairie des Publications officielles et du Bulletin des Lois, Georges Roustau, 1902. 12mo, pp. 141.

THE desertion of country-side for city by-ways, and the causes and social consequences of migration into urban communities, has fallen under the facile pen of M. Achille Magnier—poet, romancer, humanitarian, philosopher, and writer of prize essays for the *Société nationale d'encouragement au bien*. According to M. Magnier, the population problem in France resolves itself, in the last analysis, into the problem of rural depopulation. It is in agricultural sections that natural increase of population is most rapid, and the retardation of growth of the French population as a whole is explained as a direct consequence of the very general migration which has taken place out of the country into the city—a movement which has involved some 13 per cent. of the total French population, or approximately five millions of people, during the last fifty years. This is felt to be a serious condition by those who believe, as does M. Magnier, that the political future of

France depends largely upon her numerical strength, and who are disposed to quote in this connection the old adage, "*qui n'avance pas recule!*" The *mal terrible* from which the French people are suffering is declared to be a mortally apoplectic concentration of vital forces in the national capital, which induces in rural communities an equally critical condition of social anæmia.

Paris is absorbing, year by year, the greater part of the growth of the French population, and in other departments the census returns show that it is the urban populations alone which have gained, while outside these centers there has been a decrease in population.

The psychology of motive underlying those migratory currents which result in the organic growth of great urban centers is not yet very well understood. Conditions appear to be less favorable in the city than in the country for the maintenance of any given standard of comfort; rates of mortality, sickness, and crime are higher. The supply of labor greatly exceeds demand. Witness figures cited from official documents recording seven thousand applicants in Paris for twenty janitorships. Meanwhile labor is not available for cultivating the soil and gathering crops throughout the country at large. In fact, these migrations appear to take place in accordance with physical laws rather than as a result of intelligent volition, and the population problem thus becomes one in physical science. The same formulæ apply to demographic and to natural phenomena. The laws of coherence and gravitation that regulate molecular action and fixation in material substances apply with equal certainty to population masses. Large aggregates of population attract with a force proportional to their masses and from year to year this force, obeying the formulæ of mass and distance, determines absolutely the migrations and geographical distribution of a people.

M. Magnier is one of a host of able thinkers in France who are discussing ways and means of staying this blind rush cityward, and of disillusionizing the misguided "disinherited" children of the peasant populations who would undertake the vain quest of fortune and honor and social distinction in great cities. The program of the *Ligue de decentralisation*, which is working to effect a radical decentralization of political power and administration of economic activities and of intellectual and social life is presented and other similar movements on foot to fix population upon the land are described.

The institution of the family, upon which all our social life depends, it is declared, is seriously jeopardized.

JOHN CUMMINGS.